

# ‘Militant’ gives insight into uniting working class

BY MARY MARTIN AND CHRIS HOEPPNER

“It seems like the *Militant* gives insight into how working people handle things and what they’re involved in,” striking silver miner Boyd Dotson told Socialist Workers Party members

## SWP FALL ‘MILITANT,’ BOOK, FUND DRIVE

at the United Steelworkers Local 5114 union hall in Mullan, Idaho, Oct. 31.

“I’m a Desert Storm era veteran. When I got home, I worked as a card dealer on a riverboat back east, then in a nuclear power plant in Illinois. When I came back west I worked in a sawmill and a fiberglass plant before becoming a miner,” he said. “We need to find a way to make our load lighter in life. The only way I see to do this is to work together.”

Dotson and Kristie Cline, his niece, whose husband is also a striking miner, were staffing the union hall while other strikers were holding a rally

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## Fall campaign to sell Militant subscriptions and books

Sept. 16 - Nov 21 (Week 7)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold
UNITED STATES				
Albany	95	60	95	47
Atlanta	85	68	85	71
Chicago	115	91	115	70
Colorado	30	9	30	8
Lincoln	30	17	30	14
Los Angeles	135	92	135	46
Miami	45	28	45	28
New York	180	124	180	97
Oakland	125	110	135	111
Philadelphia	70	55	70	45
Seattle	105	84	105	57
Twin Cities	75	54	75	52
Washington	80	70	80	41
Total U.S.	1,170	862	1,180	687
Prisoners	20	25		
UNITED KINGDOM				
London	65	64	65	49
Manchester	60	47	60	32
Total U.K.	125	111	125	81
CANADA				
Montreal	60	40	60	39
Vancouver	45	33	45	25
Total Canada	105	73	105	64
New Zealand	50	38	50	31
Australia	45	35	45	21
Total	1,515	1,144	1,505	884
SHOULD BE	1,500	1,167	1,500	1,167

# Safety at center of fight by Calif. aerospace workers



International Association of Machinists Local 1584 members picket Henkel Aerospace in Bay Point, California, Oct. 21. Workers began strike five days earlier for new contract.

BY ERIC SIMPSON

BAY POINT, Calif. — Eighty members of International Association of Machinists Local 1584 in the paste and film department of Henkel Aerospace here went on strike Oct. 16. Safety is at the heart of the fight for a new contract. Over the past six months, several workers have been severely burned by steam.

They joined the union and won their first contract after the death in 2013 of David Eleidjian, a temporary worker who had only been on the job a week. His clothing caught on a mixing machine and he was crushed. An Iraq war veteran, Eleidjian was the father of a 3-year-old child.

The California Occupational Safety and Health Administration fined Henkel \$200,825 for safety violations, and the staffing company \$1,500.

“This tragedy was completely preventable,” the director of California’s

Department of Industrial Relations said. “The company continued to operate the mixer despite knowing that the partial guard on the mixer exposed workers to dangerous moving parts.”

The company has forced quality

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# Striking Idaho silver miners rally to build support for union struggle

BY EDWIN FRUIT

COEUR D’ALENE, Idaho — “The owners want the working class to be inexpensive for them. They want to work us till we can’t work anymore and then get rid of us, especially older workers,” Don Scheel told the *Militant* on the picket line at the Lucky Friday mine Oct. 31. “People have to get together and fight and we have to rebuild the unions.” Scheel works at the

# Tehran-Saudi conflict grows in war-torn Middle East

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

With the defeat of Islamic State in all but a few towns along the Iraqi-Syrian border, Washington and the contending capitalist regimes in the region are turning their attention to new conflicts and battles shaping politics in the Mideast.

Iran’s capitalist rulers have taken advantage of the war against Islamic State to make progress in securing a land route from the Afghanistan border, across Iran, Iraq and Syria to Hezbollah-controlled areas in Lebanon to the Mediterranean Sea and close to the Israeli border.

To do so, Tehran has deployed Hezbollah military forces from Lebanon and Shiite-based militias from Iraq, whose leaders pay allegiance to Iran’s Revolutionary Guard. These forces, along with Moscow, have helped crush the rising struggle for political rights and space in Syria that began

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# Rulers look to corporate tax cut to lift capitalist growth, profits

BY TERRY EVANS

Saying they will increase profits and kick-start economic growth, President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans submitted a bill to slash corporate tax rates Nov. 2. Trump called the measure “The Cut Cut Cut Act.”

Licking their chops at the prospects of greater profits, many among the propertied ruling families back the measure and its proposal to cut the rate from 35 to 20 percent, anticipating it will boost capitalist production at least for now.

This follows months of a small uptick in hiring and manufacturing, coming as profit rates have tended to decline for four decades, resulting in a worldwide slowdown and stagnation

of production, trade and, most importantly for working people, in the rates of productive employment.

The editors of the *Wall Street Journal* applauded the proposals, saying they would allow bosses to be “more competitive.”

The popularity of the bill in the boss class has slowed down some of the political infighting in the Republican Party and gained support for Trump’s presidency. Now called the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the bill does not include some traditional Republican shibboleths, like cutting income tax on those in the top income brackets. But as most workers know, tax laws allow the wealthiest to hide income and evade paying anything

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mine’s surface mill and has more than 10 years seniority.

Some 60 striking members of United Steelworkers Local 5114 and their supporters rallied at the Hecla Mining Co. headquarters the same day, showing their determination to keep fighting in the eight-month-long strike. Miners at the Lucky Friday silver, lead and zinc mine in Mullan, Idaho, went on strike March 13 after rejecting Hecla’s concession-filled “last, best and final offer.”

The union has organized picket lines and rallies, spoken to other unions about the strike and sponsored social activities to bring together miners and their families. Strikers have

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# Boss shuts internet news site to bust workers' union

BY CANDACE WAGNER

NEW YORK — Some 200 people rallied here Nov. 6 in support of 115 workers in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Washington, D.C., who were fired when Joe Ricketts, billionaire owner of DNAinfo and Gothamist, shut down the online news sites. Just days before the shutdown, 25 out of 27 workers at the New York office had voted to join the Writers Guild of America East. The other sites were nonunion.

“I’m proud to be out here today,” Emma Whitford, a Gothamist reporter, told the rally. “Don’t be afraid because of what happened to us. Do what we did. Unionize.”

Ricketts, founder of online investing company TD Ameritrade and owner of the Chicago Cubs baseball team, is worth over \$2 billion. The sites had 9 million readers a month and paid workers a fraction of what they made “in the heyday of print newspapers,” the *New York Times* reported. Even so, the company said it was losing money.

But that wasn’t why Ricketts shut it down. In September he posted a statement titled, “Why I’m Against Unions at Businesses I Create.” It said, “Unions promote a corrosive us-against-them dynamic that destroys

the esprit de corps businesses need to succeed.” Earlier the company’s chief operations officer sent out an email threatening that joining the union might be “the final straw that caused the business to close.”

“It is no secret that threats were made to these workers during the organizing drive,” Writers Guild East Communications Director Jason Gordon said in a statement.

Members of District Council 37 public employees union, Teamsters, United Federation of Teachers along with other journalists joined the rally.

## Workers give ‘blood money’ to build Socialist Workers Party

BY EMMA JOHNSON

“We consider this blood money and we are proud to turn it over for use by the revolutionary party,” Mary Martin, Cecelia Moriarity and John Naubert, three members of the Socialist Workers Party in Seattle, said in a note they sent in with a check totaling \$213.99.

The money stems from a settlement in a class-action lawsuit against Kelly Temporary Services where they worked over four years ago, about the wording on the paperwork that workers had to sign for background and credit checks in order to get hired.

## ‘I’m not backing off of fight against cop brutality’



Militant

NEW YORK — “It’s been five years and I’m not going to back off,” Hawa Bah told the *Militant* Nov. 1. “I’m fighting for the truth about what happened to my son.” She had just gone through the first day of the trial over the killing of her son, Mohamed, by New York City police officers. The Bah family filed the civil suit against the city and the officers involved in Mohamed Bah’s death.

Hawa Bah is in the center of the photo, taken outside the federal court. With her in the front row from left are Iris Baez, whose son Anthony was killed by New York cops in 1994; Kadiatou Diallo, whose son Amadou was shot 41 times in 1999; Gwen Garr, whose son Eric Garner was strangled to death by the cops; and Adama Bah, Mohamed’s cousin.

On Sept. 25, 2012, Hawa Bah dialed 911 to ask for an ambulance for her son, a student and taxi driver, who was suffering a mental breakdown. Instead, nine heavily armed cops arrived. Refusing to allow her back into the apartment to speak with her son, the police shot and killed him, claiming he threatened them with a knife. The knife and other evidence were never tested for fingerprints and are now “contaminated” or “lost,” police officials say.

A Manhattan grand jury and federal prosecutors refused to indict any of the cops.

— SHEILA LAWRENCE

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# THE MILITANT

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AP/Charlie Neibergall

Demonstrators from New Jersey protest at 2015 Gov. Chris Christie speech in Iowa.

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‘Militant’ gives insight

Continued from front page  
outside the Hecla Mining bosses’ headquarters in Coeur d’Alene. They pooled their money to get a subscription to the *Militant* along with a copy of *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. The strike against Hecla is in its eighth month. (See article on front page.)

Party members were in Idaho to bring solidarity to the striking miners, join their rally and knock on workers’ doors in the area to discuss the strike, the deepening capitalist economic crisis, and its effects on working people, and to introduce the party and its publications.

We met Brandy Baldwin in Smelterville. She and her husband worked in a garment shop 50 miles from home until the company announced it was closing and sending the work to Mexico. She told SWP members Edwin Fruit and Michele Smith that even before their jobs disappeared, they were already struggling to cover the heating bill and other expenses.

“We don’t have any health insurance now,” Baldwin said. “I think we will need a revolution in this country to change what is happening to working people.” Her husband said he knew some miners who had died in fires and explosions in area mines and backed the silver miners strike for union control over safety wholeheartedly. They signed up for a subscription.

We also visited Becky Altman at her home in Mullan. She renewed her subscription. Altman said her sons, a striking silver miner and a gold miner in Alaska, had to leave home to find work because the mines dominate the area and there aren’t many other jobs.

“I support the miners strike because I understand the importance of safety. Too many have died over the years,” she said.

Altman said she had backed President

Donald Trump in the elections because he seemed to stand for the working class, but was having second thoughts. “I’m not so sure now that he’ll help working people,” she said.

Over two days in the area six people signed up for subscriptions and we were able to get back in touch with a number of strikers and their relatives we met during their battle with the silver bosses.

Members of the SWP and Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom and supporters elsewhere are in the home stretch of a nine-week campaign to increase readership of the *Militant* and books by party leaders.

Our discussions on workers’ doorsteps focus on the disastrous effects of the capitalists’ economic, social and political crisis, their ongoing wars abroad and the need for working people to chart a road to take power out of their hands and run the country ourselves.

Five books are offered at special discount when bought with a subscription. In addition to *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record*, they are: *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, all by Jack Barnes; *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters; and *‘It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System’* by five Cuban revolutionaries who were framed up and imprisoned in the U.S. for up to 16 years for their actions in defense of their revolution.

Reaching out to Walmart workers

Party members and supporters who work at Walmart continue to reach out to co-workers and others to introduce the party and its publications. SWP member Jill Hendricks and party supporter Morrie Dietrich went door to door near Walmart stores in Burnsville and Bloomington, Minnesota. By the end of the week they had sold six subscriptions and one of the books on special.

The drive runs concurrently with the SWP’s \$100,000 fall fund to finance the party’s ongoing work. Below is a chart showing fund goals and progress in meeting them.

Hendricks reports that party mem-



Militant/John Steele

“They always blame the workers when something goes wrong. It’s like that where I work,” Steelworkers member Karley Gogas, left, told Annette Kouri as she got a subscription to the *Militant* in Ingersoll, Ontario, Oct. 13. They were talking about the frame-up trial against rail unionists Tom Harding and Richard Labrie in Lac-Mégantic rail disaster that killed 47 people.

bers in the Twin Cities have collected \$46 from 12 different co-workers at Walmart and by going door to door in neighborhoods around the stores where they work.

SWP branch quotas are currently \$750 short of the \$100,000 fund drive goal. We need increases from places like in Albany, New York, where pledges are now \$314 over its quota. Contributions from *Militant* readers are a big help.

“A hotel worker on the picket line in front of the Albany Hilton contributed \$5 to the party fund, and a worker we met knocking on doors in Troy also kicked in \$5,” Maggie Trowe reports.

Janet Post writes that she and party member John Staggs organized a house meeting with Ezequiel Hernandez, a member of Transport Workers Union Local 234 who is laid off from Hyundai Rotem rail car assembly plant in Philadelphia. Hernandez wanted to renew his *Militant* subscription and talk about what workers face in his native Puerto Rico where they are living through an ongoing social disaster after Hurricane Irma.

He pointed to a headline in the *Militant* — “U.S. Colonialism Is Root of Carnage in Puerto Rico” —

and showed it to his mother Carmen, who greeted us with fresh coffee and joined the conversation.

“I think the U.S. government is letting Puerto Rico bleed because they are not sure how much more they can exploit from the island,” Hernandez said. He told us they haven’t been able to reach his aunt, who lives in one of the areas hardest hit by the storm. “I sent a money order to my cousin, but who knows if he got it because there still is no communication service.”

If you would like to sign up for a *Militant* subscription or to order the books on discount, contact the office of the Socialist Workers party nearest you listed on page 8.

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Correction

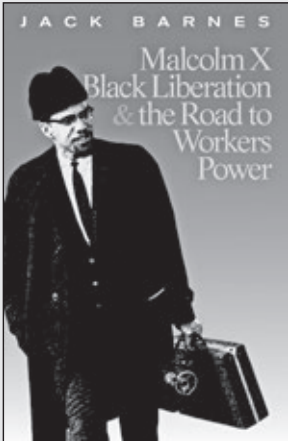
The caption for the photo used in issue 41 with the article “Brigadistas Learn About Cuba, Organize to Defend the Revolution,” erroneously identified the Portales Cave as Che Guevara’s headquarters during the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion. The Portales Cave was Che’s command post during the October 1962 “missile crisis.”

Socialist Workers Party Fund Drive  
Sept. 16 - Nov. 21- Week 7

Area	Quota	Collected	%
Albany	\$5,000	\$4,114	82%
Atlanta	\$11,200	\$6,434	57%
Chicago	\$12,000	\$7,268	61%
Colorado	\$700	\$500	71%
Lincoln	\$300	\$207	69%
Los Angeles	\$9,400	\$7,665	82%
Miami	\$3,500	\$1,495	43%
New York	\$17,000	\$9,496	56%
Oakland	\$14,500	\$8,576	59%
Philadelphia	\$4,200	\$1,686	40%
Seattle	\$8,200	\$5,325	65%
Twin Cities	\$4,800	\$1,066	22%
Washington, DC	\$7,250	\$3,776	52%
Other	\$1,200	\$500	42%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$99,250</b>	<b>\$58,108</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>Should Be</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>\$77,778</b>	<b>78%</b>

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# New conflicts in Mideast

Continued from front page

with mass public protests in 2011, ensuring the continued dictatorial rule of Bashar al-Assad there.

Tehran has increased its control over the majority Shiite government in Iraq, too. Tehran-backed forces have led recent attacks against Kurdish Regional Government peshmerga forces, seizing Kirkuk and other territory in northern Iraq after the Sept. 25 Kurdish independence vote in that region.

The government of Saudi Arabia, Tehran's principal rival in the region, is counterpunching by trying to strengthen its political and military position, in alliance with other bourgeois Arab regimes. Decades-long monarchical rule by the Al Saud family has held back capitalist development, keeping the kingdom dependent on its massive oil reserves.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is leading efforts to reverse engines. He began a series of purges Nov. 5, arresting top ruling family members and tycoons.

He ordered the arrest of 11 princes and more than three dozen current and former ministers on allegations of "corruption." They include multi-billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal and Miteb bin Abdullah, minister and former chief of Saudi Arabia's National Guard.

Prince Mohammed is also curbing the power of the Wahhabi Sunni religious hierarchy to make them subservient to the capitalist regime.

Under the rubric "Saudi Vision 2030," the regime is pouring hundreds of billions of dollars into projects to build industrial zones, technology centers, new cities, and resorts and other tourist attractions.

Prince Mohammed, whose father became king in 2015, has taken control of the military, national guard and intelligence operations, and stripped the religious police of arrest powers.

In September King Salman announced steps to introduce more modern bourgeois social relations, lifting restrictions on the right of women to drive and attend public sporting events. Prince Mohammed has since called for "gender mixing" and music at public events. The regime arrested clerics and other figures who oppose these changes.

The vast majority of the working class in Saudi Arabia is made up of immigrant workers. Its army, though large and well armed, has been incapable — even though backed by U.S. bombers — of putting down a smoldering rebellion by a smaller Tehran-backed Houthi force in Yemen.

**Future holds more wars, instability**

The war in Yemen is devastating working people there. Thousands of civilians have died, including many from U.S. and Saudi airstrikes. The country is on the brink of famine. Poor sanitary conditions have led to almost 800,000 cases of cholera since last year and more than 2,100 deaths.

Houthi rebels in Yemen fired a ballistic missile Nov. 4 that reached the outskirts of Saudi Arabia's capital before being shot down. Saudi foreign minister Adel Jubair called the attack an "act of war" by Tehran.

To finance deeper conflicts in the region, the Saudi rulers are looking to sell shares in the Saudi Arabian Oil Co., the largest oil producer in the world. President Donald Trump urged the Saudis to market the stock, worth as much as \$100 billion, on the New York Stock Exchange.

**Lebanon's prime minister resigns**

On Nov. 4 in a televised address from the Saudi capital, Riyadh, Lebanon's Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri announced his resignation, saying that he believed his life was in danger given the growing strength of the Hezbollah Shiite militia. Through Hezbollah, Iran has created "a state within a state" in Lebanon, he said.

"We will treat the government of Lebanon as a government declaring war," Thamer al-Sabhan, Saudi Arabia's minister of state for Persian Gulf Affairs, told the press.

Washington, far and away the strongest imperialist power in the world, with large military bases across the Middle East, now confronts an emboldened Tehran and the emergence of Moscow as a force in the area.

Moscow, and especially Beijing, are becoming increasingly meaningful capitalist competitors in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

## Attacks spread against Kurds' fight for independence

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The Kurdish people, the largest nation worldwide without their own country, are facing new attacks on their rights and struggle for self-determination.

Since voting overwhelmingly for independence in September, Kurds in northern Iraq have faced military invasion by government troops and Tehran-backed Hashd al-Shaabi militia that seized Kirkuk and a total of 30 percent of the area the Kurdish Regional Government had controlled.

After the invasion, some 180,000 Kurds and other residents fled. A large number took refuge in the Kurdish cities of Erbil and Sulaymaniyah. Shiite-led militias looted and burned hundreds of homes in Tuz Khurmatu in southern Kirkuk. "We do believe, yes, that the operation to take over Kirkuk was led by the Iranians with knowledge of the U.S. and British officials," Masoud Barzani, long-time leader of the Kurdish struggle and head of the Kurdish Democratic Party, told *Newsweek*. He said that the Kurds will have to re-evaluate their relations with Washington, adding it had been a big surprise to them that

**NY protest: 'Stop aggression against Kurdistan!'**



Militant

NEW YORK — "Independence for Kurdistan yes! War no!" chanted some 60 people at a Nov. 3 rally outside the United Nations here. The protest was organized by the Kurdistan-American Community of North America. Participants came from New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Tennessee and Washington, D.C. Most were originally from the part of Kurdistan that is currently in Iraq. In addition to many signs condemning the attacks on Kurdistan by both Iraqi and Iranian forces that followed the overwhelming vote for independence Sept. 25, many carried Kurdish and U.S. flags.

"When the United States wants our help fighting ISIS [Islamic State], they talk a lot about us. But now that we're being attacked, they're very quiet, they don't say a word," Bayan Merani said.

"Our fight continues," Jogyar Taha, who came to the demonstration from Binghamton in upstate New York, told the *Militant*. "Kurdistan is our land and we'll never give up."

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

the U.S. government allowed the Iraqi army to use U.S.-provided weapons to attack the Kurds.

While there is a temporary military truce on the ground, the Iraqi government continues to set the groundwork for further attacks. They have ceased all reference to the Kurdish Regional Government or its authority as defined in Iraq's Constitution. Instead, the Shiite-controlled government has instructed state agencies to refer to the Kurdish region as "the provinces of northern Iraq" or just plain "Iraq."

For the first time, anti-U.S. protests have taken place in Erbil, the KRG's capital. They included signs being hung around the city saying, "US armed PMF to kill civilians." PMF are the initials for the Popular Mobilization Forces, the official name of the Shiite militias.

Iraqi troops and Hashd al-Shaabi militia are still sitting outside the Fishkabour border crossing between Kurdistan and Syria. Peshmerga leaders and Iraqi army brass are engaged in discussion about who should control the crossing.

"The purpose of the Iraqi Federal Government," peshmerga spokes-

man Halgurd Hikmat told Kurdistan 24 News Nov. 2, is "to recreate what happened in Kirkuk in other parts of the Kurdistan Region."

The Kurds also faced economic attack and threatened military action from both Tehran and Ankara, each of which oppresses a substantial Kurdish population and fears that an independent Kurdistan would inspire the Kurds within their borders.

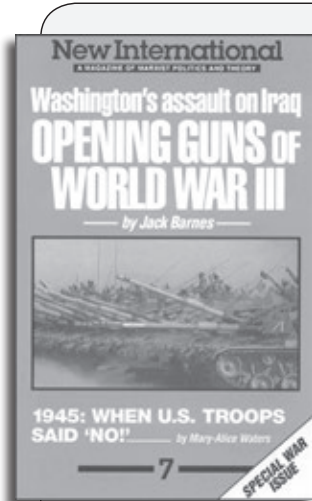
Shifts in military and political alliances with the looming end to the ground war against Islamic State in both Iraq and Syria, and of the civil war in Syria as well, have led to threats by the dictatorial government of Bashar al-Assad in Damascus against Kurds there. Syrian Kurds, with the backing of Washington up to now, have been the most effective fighters against Islamic State.

Assad is threatening to invade the autonomous Kurdish region in Syria. Bouthaina Shaaban, a top adviser to Assad, said pointedly that what had happened to the KRG in Iraq "should be a lesson" to Kurds in Syria.

When Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign policy adviser to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was in Syria for consultations with Assad, told Reuters that Syrian troops "would soon advance to take Raqqa" from Kurdish fighters.

The big question, of course, is whether Washington will step out of the way as it did in Iraq.

"The U.S. rulers have alternately doled out aid with an eyedropper to Kurdish nationalist groups," wrote Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes in "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq," in *New International* no. 7, "and then abruptly cut off this backing, depending on Washington's shifting relations with regimes in the area, especially Baghdad and Tehran."



### Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq

by Jack Barnes

In *New International* no. 7

"The U.S. rulers have no interests in the national rights of the Kurds. The depth of national pride and determination of the Kurdish people is a mystery to them."

— Jack Barnes

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# Idaho silver miners strike

**Continued from front page**

given solidarity to fellow workers standing up to the bosses in the region.

“I won’t go back to work under the conditions the company is demanding,” striking miner Ron Sullivan said at the picket shack in Mullan.

## Bosses undermine union control

The mine bosses are seeking to undermine union control of work conditions by eliminating the seniority-based job bid system. They also plan to slash layoff recall rights from three years to three months, and give the bosses the power to raise premiums and deductibles for health insurance at any time.

“Hecla’s proposal to eliminate the current seniority-based job bidding system remains the engine in the company’s drive to weaken our union and exert complete control over our working lives,” Local 5114 said in a Sept. 12 statement.

Workers know that union control of the organization of work crews is essential to protect miners’ lives. Many tell you about the fire at the Sunshine

Mine near Big Creek, Idaho, that killed 91 miners in 1972 and about the two workers who were killed at the Lucky Friday Mine in April and November 2011. In December that year a mine collapse at Lucky Friday injured at least seven miners.

Most strikers have temporarily taken jobs out of town, so family members help staff the picket line 24 hours a day, seven days a week. When Socialist Workers Party members brought two bags of food to the food bank in Wallace, a woman staffing the office told us her husband is among the strikers currently working in North Dakota who aren’t able to come home regularly.

Brian Skiffington, a member of the Young Workers Committee of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 23 in Tacoma, Washington, joined the Oct. 31 rally. He said that his union had sent a contingent of Longshore workers from Tacoma, Seattle and other locals to the Aug. 2 strike solidarity rally here. At that time his local gave \$5,000 to the miners.

Others present at the rally includ-



Militant/Mary Martin

**Striking miners from Lucky Friday Mine protest at Hecla Mining Co. in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, Oct. 31. Fight to defend control over safe work conditions is at heart of miners’ fight.**

ed USW members from Arizona; Steelworkers and Machinists from Spokane, Washington; a member of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees from Albany, Oregon; and members of the Socialist Workers Party from Seattle.

## ‘Injury to one is an injury to all’

Skiffington’s ILWU local helped host some of the striking miner “Road Warriors” who came to Tacoma in September to show support to Teamsters on strike against a trucking company there. “That was great,” he said. “The ILWU believes that an injury to one is an injury to all.”

The American Federation of Musicians Local 76-493 from Seattle sent a letter of support and a \$200 contribution Oct. 18.

“The company is not willing to discuss any of the substantive issues.

In reality nothing has changed from their last best and final offer from March,” Dave Roose, a member of the union negotiating committee, told the *Militant*. He said that the company wants 12-hour shifts, and a 24-hour, seven-day operation, including working on holidays. Although there had been negotiations, now “things have just stopped.”

Hecla has tried to keep production going with management and nonunion workers. But third-quarter production for this year has dropped 90 percent from the same period last year, the *Spokesman-Review* reported Oct. 13, citing company sources.

Send messages of support and contributions for the union hardship fund to: USW Local 5114, P.O. Box 427, Mullan, Idaho 83846.

*Mary Martin contributed to this article.*

## Recommended Reading

### TRADE UNIONS in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay by Leon Trotsky

**INCLUDES: “Trade Unions: Their Past, Present and Future” by Karl Marx**

“[Unions] must now learn to act deliberately as organizing centers of the working class in the broad interest of its *complete emancipation*”

— KARL MARX

### TEAMSTER POLITICS by Farrell Dobbs

Dobbs, a central leader of the labor battles and debates recorded here, tells how in the 1930s the leadership of Teamsters Local 544 in Minneapolis fought to lead workers across the Midwest onto an independent working-class political course.

See distributors on page 8 or visit

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## Aerospace workers fight for safety

**Continued from front page**

control, warehouse workers, temporary agency workers and others to work beside untrained supervisors, operating dangerous equipment.

“Please be careful, without the proper training this work can be very

dangerous. In the past few years, there have been numerous accidents and even a fatality. We work with all of you every day and we are concerned for your safety,” a union flyer passed out to workers entering the plant reads.

“This is the same type of bullying tactics, disrespect and complete disregard for workplace safety that pushed us to say enough is enough and go Union! We Are Stronger Together! We can help you!”

“The nonunion workers are scared to death of the machines the company claims they are certified to run,” Steve Older, a union representative, told the *Militant*. “Our beef is not with them. It’s with the company.”

Two rallies have been held outside the plant, and United Steelworkers members from the POSCO coil mill nearby hosted a barbecue for strikers.

People driving by the picket line have been honking in support. While this correspondent was there, a woman stopped her car and jumped out with bottled water. “I live down the street and want to show my support,” she said as she shook hands with striker Jeremy Albert.

“I was surprised at how unified we are,” Albert, a paste operator, said. “But we have to be. They backed us into a corner.”

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



**November 20, 1992**

George Bush’s defeat in the U.S. presidential elections is being widely attributed to a poor campaign strategy or some combination of errors by the Bush administration.

None of this is true, said Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, in a November 7 talk.

“The truth of the matter is that the U.S. ruling class broke its teeth on the Iraq War,” Barnes asserted. “They didn’t achieve any of the political goals they went to war over in the Gulf. Like their ‘victory’ in the Cold War, what was initially presented as a great victory turned out to be the opposite.”

President-elect William Clinton condemned Bush for not being quick enough to use U.S. military power.



**November 20, 1967**

It is true that the assassination of Che Guevara is a heavy blow to the Bolivian guerrilla struggle. Nevertheless guerrilla war in Bolivia has deep national and economic causes.

The people struck at the military caste the very day of the coup d’état, Nov. 4, 1964. The miners led the struggle against the dictatorship.

The dictatorship was unable to find a social base. It has no force with which to govern outside of the army. Up to the present 8,000 workers have been fired from the mines for political or union activity.

It has proved impossible to convert the peasants into a conservative social force, a support for the bourgeois governments.



**November 21, 1942**

Tyne shipbuilding workers returned to work on October 13, after an eight-day strike which involved workers in all trades employed on the yards. This was the biggest strike since the outbreak of the war.

The action was provoked by the maneuvers of the union leaders with the employers’ organization, who sprang a new agreement without prior consultation with the workers. The agreement altered the day wages were made up.

The Communist Party marshaled the whole of its apparatus to smash the strike. A strong bloc signified they were quitting the party. These workers will keep the trust of their fellow workers.



# US gov’t doesn’t have ‘moral authority’ to criticize Cuba

UN votes 191-2 against US embargo against Cuba

BY OSBORNE HART

UNITED NATIONS — For the 26th year in a row, the U.N. General Assembly voted overwhelmingly Nov. 1 to demand “an end to the U.S. economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.” This year the vote was 191-2 — only the governments of the United States and Israel voted against the resolution. Last year they abstained.

Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez told the body that even before Cuban working people overthrew dictator Fulgencio Batista in 1959 every U.S. president for 100 years has sought to “dominate and exercise hegemony over Cuba.”

U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley repeated many of the timeworn slanders against the Cuban Revolution and its leadership, claiming the Cuban people have been “deprived of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.” She claimed the revolutionary government “disrupts peaceful assemblies. It censors independent journalists and rigs the economy so the government alone profits.” And she argued that the purpose of the U.S. aggression was to aid the Cuban people so that they can “one day be free to choose their own destiny.”

“It is true that we had been left nearly alone in opposition to this annual resolution,” she stated. She made it clear that the propertied rulers in the U.S. care little what other governments think.

“Let’s be honest,” she added. “This assembly does not have the power to end the U.S. embargo. ... Only the United States Congress can.”

“The United States does not have the slightest moral authority to criticize Cuba,” Rodríguez replied. “The U.S. representative spoke in the name of the head of an empire that is responsible

for most of the wars in progress on the planet today ... and is the decisive factor in worldwide instability.”

Rodríguez noted that from the first days of the revolution, Washington sought to overthrow it. He quoted from an April 6, 1960, memorandum by the U.S. State Department titled, “The Decline and Fall of Castro.” The memo outlined Washington’s goals in beginning its economic war against the Cuban Revolution, saying the economic embargo would “bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow of [the] government.”

Haley criticized the Barack Obama administration for abstaining on the vote last year. The abstention followed the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba. The steadfast determination of Cuban working people had prevented the U.S. economic war against them from succeeding. Obama had to admit that Washington needed to shift tactics in their continuing effort to bring down Cuba’s socialist revolution.

Of course, Rodríguez said, the Obama administration refused to end the embargo. Washington has never admitted the embargo is “a flagrant, massive and systematic violation of the human rights of Cubans,” he said, “nor did it renounce the goal of subjugating our people.”

In June Washington reinstituted a ban on some “people-to-people” trips to Cuba that had been lifted by the Obama administration. And the Donald Trump administration restricted some of the small amount of U.S.-Cuba trade that had been allowed after the two governments’ re-established diplomatic relations. Most of the Obama administration’s changes remain in place.

## History of lies and aggression

“The policy announced by President

## Miami action demands ‘No deportations!’



Militant/Chuck Guerra

MIAMI — Several dozen people gathered in front of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services office here Oct. 28 to protest threats to deport thousands of immigrants from Haiti and Central America if their Temporary Protected Status is not renewed.

The program covers over 400,000 people, many of whom have been in the U.S. for over 20 years. It is granted to immigrants who have fled here as a result of national disasters — like earthquakes in Haiti — or social unrest. Their status is reviewed every 18 months. Up for immediate decision are some 86,000 Hondurans and 5,000 Nicaraguans.

Marleine Bastien from Haitian Women of Miami and other speakers called for TPS to be extended and for Congress to allow people admitted under it to become permanent residents. Anthony Dutrow from the Socialist Workers Party called for amnesty for all immigrants and an end to deportations. This fight can win broad support from working people, he said, because there is less prejudice among U.S.-born workers towards immigrants than ever before.

— CHUCK GUERRA

Trump on June 16 is not new; it is the same old policy,” Rodríguez said. “It has been a history of lies and aggression.”

Using the pretext of alleged “sonic attacks” on U.S. diplomatic personnel in Havana — for which they have presented no evidence and at the same time admit the Cuban government bears no responsibility for — the State Department called most of its Havana staff home and stopped granting visas to Cubans who want to emigrate or visit the United States. At the same time they ordered the expulsion of most of the Cuban diplomatic personnel in the U.S.

The false charges about “sonic attacks” are a political pretext to further “intensify the blockade,” Rodríguez said.

After the vote, Rodríguez visited with hundreds of supporters of the Cuban Revolution who had gathered to celebrate outside Cuba’s U.N. mission.

said.

Haley claimed the U.N. vote virtually unanimously rejecting Washington’s economic war against the Cuban people was just “political theater.”

Rodríguez gave numerous examples of how the U.S. rulers’ decadent economic assault directly affects the lives of the Cuban people, highlighting its impact on the import and export of medicines and medical devices.

Medicuba tried to buy a device used to diagnose prostate cancer from a German company, but company officials said they couldn’t fulfill the order because of the U.S. embargo.

“The Cuban people will never renounce the building of a sovereign, independent, socialist, democratic, prosperous and sustainable nation,” Rodríguez said.

After the vote, Rodríguez visited with hundreds of supporters of the Cuban Revolution who had gathered to celebrate outside Cuba’s U.N. mission.

Trump proclaimed the blockade to be the fundamental axis of his anti-Cuban policy, and announced a series of measures meant to reinforce it. ...

[Referring to the U.S. government, Rodríguez said that] the use of torture; police killings of African-Americans; civilian deaths caused by its troops; the indiscriminate, and racially motivated death penalty; the murder, repression, and police surveillance of immigrants; the separation of families; the detention or deportation of minors; and the brutal measures threatening the children of undocumented immigrants who grew up and were educated in the United States are deserving of condemnation. ...

[The ambassador] has come to tell us that she recognizes that the future of the island rests in the hands of the Cuban people. She is telling a flat out lie. Historically it was never that way. It is a history of their attempt to dominate and exercise hegemony over Cuba. ...

Today I reiterate that Cuba will never accept conditions or impositions and we remind the president and his ambas-

Continued on page 7

# Dreke: ‘Che led by example, by his revolutionary morals’

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

ROME — Cuban leader Victor Dreke concluded a five-city speaking tour of Italy here Oct. 12, which also included meetings in Venice, Padua, Parma and Genoa, to honor Ernesto Che Guevara on the 50th anniversary of his death in combat in Bolivia. The tour was sponsored by the Italy-Cuba Friendship Association. Dreke’s wife, Dr. Ana Morales, participated in several of the panels.

Guevara was a central leader of the Cuban Revolution. After the revolutionary triumph in 1959 he occupied a range of leadership assignments as industry minister, president of the national bank and often represented the Cuban leadership abroad. A Marxist and accomplished combatant, he was killed by the Bolivian army Oct. 9, 1967, in a CIA-organized operation.

Guevara had led a group of Cuban and Bolivian revolutionaries in opening a guerrilla front against the Bolivian military dictatorship. Only new revolutionary victories could change the relationship of class forces and break the isolation that was weighing heavily on Cuba. Guevara and Fidel Castro believed that the political conditions in Bolivia were favorable, and its geographic position — bordering five other countries — “makes it a strategic region for extending the revolutionary struggle,” Che wrote.

Seeking to aid African forces fighting for independence from colonial rule, Guevara had earlier led a group of 128 Cuban volunteers to the Congo, where they fought alongside supporters of slain liberation leader Patrice Lumumba. Dreke, who had fought under Che during the Cuban Revolution, became a leader of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces afterwards, and served as Guevara’s deputy during the 1965 campaign in the Congo.

These events were the focus of Dreke’s talks. They also are described at length in Dreke’s own book, *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*. Politically active since the age of 15, Dreke became a cadre of the July 26 Movement, coordinating activities of students and

revolutionary-minded sugar workers; a combatant in the Rebel Army; head of the struggle against the counter-revolutionary bandits in the Escambray mountains after the revolution came to power; and an internationalist fighter.

The Cubans went to the Congo to aid followers of Lumumba fighting against dictator Joseph Mobuto and his imperialist backers in Brussels and Washington. “In Africa, 17 former colonies had formally attained their independence, but all they got was a flag and an anthem,” Dreke said, “while they continued to be oppressed and exploited by the imperialist powers.”

Journalist Fabrizio Casari, the moderator at the main event in Rome, asked Dreke if he considered the Congo mission to be a failure. “I don’t think so, no,” he responded. Even though Guevara had thought so at the time, it’s important to review this in the light of subsequent developments, Dreke said.

“The Congo mission didn’t achieve what we wanted,” he said. “But the Cuban Revolution came out strong, enabling the mission in Angola from 1975 to 1991 in which the apartheid regime was defeated by thousands of Cuban volunteer soldiers, fighting alongside Angolans and Namibians. Angola was a victory for what Che led in the Congo and for the internationalism of the Cuban Revolution under Fidel Castro’s leadership.”

Alongside Dreke at the Rome event — 300 people at the prestigious Music Park Auditorium — were academics Angelo D’Orsi and Alessandra Riccio. The two-hour presentation was interspersed with readings from Guevara’s letters and other writings, film clips and a musical performance by Renata Mezenov Sa, a Cuban living in Italy. At other events, academics and Cuba solidarity activists joined the platforms. The events often took the form of an “encounter,” with a moderator directing questions to the panelists.

In Rome, Dreke said with a smile that “with the permission of the organizers” he wanted to address a question that hadn’t been asked — Che’s relationship with Fidel Castro. He said it was important to counter the slanders that started early in the revolution and continue to be peddled today that seek to divide Fidel and Che. We have to tell the truth about this, Dreke said, “if we are to honor Che and honor Fidel.”

## Che convinced by example

“Che was a true revolutionary combatant defending the cause of socialism,” Dreke said. “He convinced by his own example, his simplicity, his moral values and revolutionary ethics. Whenever anyone stands up to fight capitalism, Che’s presence can be felt.”

When Guevara was killed in Bolivia, Dreke was in Guinea-Bissau, working with revolutionary leader Amílcar Cabral to train fighters to combat Portugal’s colonial rule. As a reaction to Che’s death, Dreke said, Cabral organized simultaneous attacks on several Portuguese garrisons, carried out by Cuban and African forces under the name “Che has not died.”

In a lively question-answer session at a town meeting of 150 in Padua, Dreke



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Above, Cuban revolutionary Victor Dreke signs copies of *From the Escambray to the Congo* at Foscari University in Venice, Italy, Oct. 6. Below, Che Guevara, right, with other Cuban combatants in the Congo in 1965, where he and Victor Dreke went to aid supporters of Patrice Lumumba, who had been assassinated by forces backed by Washington and Belgium.

was asked what he thought about developments in Venezuela. The Cuban government and people will continue to oppose the aggression against the government of Nicolás Maduro by Washington and pro-imperialist forces inside the country, he said. “There are some 40,000 Cuban volunteers in Venezuela, and they will continue to extend international solidarity.”

Asked about U.S. President Donald Trump’s stance toward Cuba, Dreke replied, “There have been 11 U.S. presidents since the Jan. 1, 1959, triumph. Each has had their own particular way of seeking to destroy the revolution. Trump is the latest. He will fail like the others because over nearly 60 years the Cuban people have demonstrated their strength in unity in defense of the revolution.”

“What are the objective conditions for victory in revolutionary struggle?” a student asked at the University of Venice. “I don’t think it’s possible to give a list,” Dreke replied, “it’s above all a leadership question.” The questioner picked up a copy of Dreke’s book along with *Is*



Ticontinental

*Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S.

Books by SWP leaders, leaders of the Cuban Revolution and other revolutionaries were available at many of the events on Pathfinder Books tables staffed by representatives of the Communist League in the United Kingdom. Participants in Dreke’s meetings purchased 95 books and six subscriptions to the *Militant*.

# ‘We’ll never negotiate principles’

Continued from page 6

sador that this approach, applied by 11 of his predecessors, has never and will never work. ...

More recently, under the pretext of illnesses of some diplomats in Havana, without the slightest evidence of their cause and origin — because they lie when they speak of attacks or incidents — nor the results of ongoing investigations, the government of the United States adopted new measures of a political nature against Cuba, which intensify the blockade and affect bilateral relations in their entirety. ...

The U.S. government, with the political purpose of restricting travel and damaging international tourism to Cuba, also issued an unfounded and utterly dishonest warning to U.S. citizens to avoid visiting our country. ...

As President Raúl Castro Ruz expressed, on July 14, “We reaffirm that

any attempt to destroy the revolution, whether through coercion and pressure, or the use of more subtle methods, will fail ... Cuba is willing to continue discussing pending bilateral issues with the United States, on the basis of equality and respect for the sovereignty and independence of our country, and to continue respectful dialogue and cooperation on issues of common interest with the U.S. government.

“Cuba and the United States can cooperate and live together, respecting our differences and promoting everything that benefits both countries and peoples, but it should not be expected that, in order to do so, Cuba will make concessions essential to its sovereignty and independence ... nor will it negotiate its principles or accept conditions of any kind, something we have never done throughout the history of the revolution.”



# To conquer power, workers need to build communist parties

*Below is an excerpt from The First Five Years of the Communist International, Volume 2, by Leon Trotsky. It is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for November. In his "Report on the Fourth World Congress," Trotsky, one of the central leaders of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, takes up the irreplaceable role of the revolutionary party in the conquest of power by working people, in Russia and in revolutions to come. Copyright © 1972 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

The working class in all countries plays a social and economic role sufficiently great to be able to find a road to the peasant masses, to the oppressed nationalities and the colonial peoples, and in this way assure itself of the majority. After the experience of the Russian revolution this is not a speculation, not a hypothesis, not a deduction, but an incontestable fact. ...

The working class must be ready for the overturn and capable of accomplishing it. The working class not only must be sufficiently powerful for it, but must be conscious of its power and must be



Beinecke Library, Yale University

**U.S. author Claude McKay speaking at Fourth Congress of Communist International, Moscow, 1922. Seated on stage, from left, Bolshevik leader Karl Radek, U.S. CP delegate James P. Cannon and German communist Clara Zetkin. Reporting on congress, Leon Trotsky explains that the 1917 Russian Revolution would not have taken place without the Bolshevik Party.**

able to apply this power. ... During the postwar years, we have observed in the political life of Europe that the working class is ready for the overturn, ready in the sense of striving subjectively toward it, ready in terms of its will, moods, self-sacrifices, but still lacking the necessary organizational leadership. Consequently the mood of the class and its organizational consciousness need not always coincide. Our revolution, thanks to an exceptional combination of historical factors, afforded our backward country the opportunity to effect the transfer of power into the hands of the working class, in a direct alliance with the peasant masses. The role of the party is all too clear to us and, fortunately, it is today already clear to the West European Communist parties. Not to take the role of the party into account is to fall into pseudo-Marxist objectivism which presupposes some sort of purely objective and automatic preparation of the revolution, and thereby postpones the revolution to an indefinite future. Such automatism is alien to us. It is a Menshevik, a Social-Democratic world outlook. We know, we have learned in practice and we are teaching others to comprehend the enormous role of the subjective, the conscious factor that the revolutionary party of the working class represents.

Without our party the 1917 overturn would not have taken place and the entire fate of our country would have been different. It would have been thrown back to vegetate as a colonial country;

it would have been plundered by and divided among the imperialist powers of the world. That this did not happen was guaranteed historically by the arming of the working class with the incomparable sword, our Communist Party. This did not happen in postwar Europe. ...

The war roused the working class to its feet in the revolutionary sense. Was the working class, because of its social weight, capable of carrying out the revolution before the war? What did it lack? It lacked the consciousness of its own strength. Its strength grew in Europe automatically, almost imperceptibly, with the growth of industry. The war shook up the working class. Because of this terrible and bloody upheaval, the entire working class in Europe was imbued with revolutionary moods on the very next day after the war ended. Consequently, one of the subjective factors, the desire to change this world, was at hand. What was lacking? The party was lacking, the party capable of leading the working class to victory. ...

In 1917, in Russia we have: the February-March revolution; and within nine months — October. The revolutionary party guarantees victory to the working class and peasant poor. In 1918 — revolution in Germany, accompanied by changes at the top; the working class tries to forge ahead but is hurled back time and again. The proletarian revolution in Germany does not lead to victory. In 1919, the eruption of the Hungarian proletarian

revolution: its base is too narrow and the party too weak. The revolution is crushed in a few months in 1919. ...

In September 1920, we lived through the great movement in Italy. Precisely at that moment in the autumn of 1920 the Italian proletariat reached its highest point of ferment after the war. Mills, plants, railways, mines are seized. The state is disorganized, the bourgeoisie is virtually prostrate, its spine almost broken. It seems that only one more step forward is needed and the Italian working class will conquer power. But at this moment, its party, that same Socialist Party which had emerged from the previous epoch, although formally adhering to the Third International but with its spirit and roots still in the previous epoch, i.e., in the Second International — this party recoils in terror from the seizure of power, from the civil war, leaving the proletariat exposed. ...

In Italy, in September, the working class was eager for battle. The party shied back in terror. In Germany the working class had been eager for battle. ... But its efforts and sacrifices were not crowned by victory because it did not have at its head a sufficiently strong, experienced and cohesive party; instead there was another party at its head which saved the bourgeoisie for the second time, after saving it during the war. And now in 1921 the Communist Party of Germany, seeing how the bourgeoisie was consolidating its positions, wanted to make a heroic attempt to cut off the bourgeoisie's road by an offensive, by a blow, and so it rushed ahead. But the working class did not support it. Why not? Because the working class had not yet learned to have confidence in the party. It did not yet fully know this party while its own experience in the civil war had brought it only defeats in the course of 1919–1920. ...

The relations between the parties and the classes, between the Communist parties and the working classes in all countries of Europe are still not mature for an immediate offensive, for an immediate battle for the conquest of power. It is necessary to proceed with a painstaking education of the Communist ranks in a twofold sense: First, in the sense of fusing them together and tempering them; and second, in the sense of their conquering the confidence of the overwhelming majority of the working class.

November

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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The Militant November 20, 2017



# No worker has to die from unsafe jobs!

The number of workers injured or killed on the job is on the rise, a direct consequence of the bosses' drive for profits. The 4,836 fatal workplace injuries in the United States reported in 2015, the latest year figures are available, was the highest since 2008. Workers in other countries face a similar disregard for human life by the employers and government officials who do their bidding.

The fight for safety on the job is a central issue in the eight-month-long strike by miners in the United Steelworkers union at Hecla Mining Co.'s Lucky Friday Mine in Mullan, Idaho, and in the strike by members of the International Association of Machinists at Henkel Aerospace in Bay Point, California. Their fights deserve the solidarity of workers nationwide.

Hecla Mining is trying to gut seniority and union control of safety conditions in the mine. The miners know that union control of the organization of work crews is essential to prevent injuries and death. Many of the miners still point to the fire in 1972 that killed 91 miners near Big Creek, Idaho, as an example of the consequences of bosses' lack of interest for safety as they strive to maximize profits.

Workers at Henkel Aerospace in California organized the union after the 2013 death of David Elejdian, a newly hired worker at the plant.

By standing up to the bosses and reaching out for solidarity these miners and aerospace workers are acting in the interests of workers everywhere.

Today, only 6.4 percent of workers employed by private companies belong to a union, a percentage that continues to decline. In New York City, where 90 percent of construction workers were unionized in the 1970s, barely 31 percent are in unions now. Con-

struction-related fatalities in the city jumped from 17 in 2011 to 25 in 2015.

No worker has to die because of unsafe working conditions! Not in construction, mining, aerospace, or any workplace.

The only way to stand up to the attacks on life and limb from the bosses' profit drive is to rely on our own strength. We need to organize, unionize and fight together for workers control of safety on the job — including the right to stop work whenever we face unsafe conditions.

Workers are willing to stand up and fight, but all too often union officials channel our struggles into support for capitalist party politicians who promise to represent our interests. The bosses have two parties — Democrats and Republicans. Those parties act for the wealthy minority whose system is responsible for exploitation, wars and the curtailment of workers' rights. The Socialist Workers Party urges workers to fight for independent working-class political action that will lead to taking political power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers.

The bosses try to divide working people — employed vs. unemployed, native born vs. immigrant, Black vs. Caucasian, women vs. men. The unions should be at the forefront of fights for amnesty for immigrant workers, against police brutality, for women's right to choose abortion, for a public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages. To unify the working class and win allies in the fight for a society built on human solidarity, not dog-eat-dog capitalist exploitation and war, is at the heart of advancing the interests of workers and farmers in this country and around the world.

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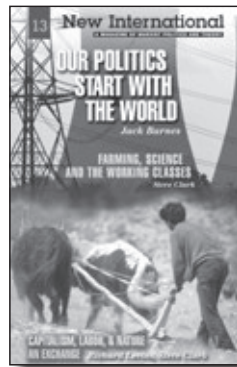
— Jack Barnes

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# Corporate tax bill

Continued from front page  
close to official tax rates.

Acknowledging that tax cuts on profits would lower the federal government's income, the bill's promoters say the gap will be closed by revenue from anticipated capitalist expansion and taxing a larger workforce.

The tax proposal comes after the first three consecutive quarters of growth above 3 percent in the gross domestic product in 13 years.

This comes on top of years of capitalist decline and attacks on working people. Millions have been pushed out of work. The labor force participation rate — the percentage of workers who are employed or "actively" looking for work — remains at 62.7 percent, showing that the working class has shrunk during the extended capitalist crisis. The carnage that has been visited on large sections of working people isn't going away.

Workers continue to face stagnant wages, declining life expectancy, rising homelessness and an opioid epidemic.

Across California there is a spreading outbreak of hepatitis A, an extremely rare disease in the U.S., bred by unsanitary living conditions. A majority of the 19 people killed by the disease in San Diego County since March had been forced to live on the streets.

Backers of the tax cut proposals claim that if they can boost production, they will boost jobs and wages. Former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers, a knee-jerk member of the anti-Trump "resistance," argues that won't happen.

In an Oct. 8 article titled "The Trump Administration's Tax Plan Is an Atrocity," Summers says the bill "would not substantially increase economic growth, would blow out the budget deficit and would make the United States an even more unequal place."

The capitalist liberal's concern is based on fears that the realities of today's capitalism will inevitably lead to a new downturn and more wars. The government will need cash, he says, for "increased national security spending."

Whether or not the bosses decide to use the tax cut to expand investment in production and exploit more workers depends on whether they believe they can profit sufficiently from doing so. There is plenty of capital lying around today — but the rulers have either been squirreling it away or using it for nonproductive speculation.

While infighting in the Republican Party has lessened, the crisis in the Democratic Party is growing. The Bernie Sanders "revolution" wing continues to push to take over.

Further rifts emerged when former Democratic National Committee head Donna Brazile recently published her account of Hillary Clinton's campaign for the party's presidential nomination. Brazile makes it clear that the leaders of the party connived to bar Sanders from any chance of winning. She now complains that the Clinton campaign "compromised the party's integrity."

In the 2016 election, the party establishment decided to turn its back on the working class. "For every blue-collar Democrat we lose in western Pennsylvania, we will pick up two moderate Republicans in the suburbs of Philadelphia," New York Sen. Chuck Schumer told party members last year. "And you can repeat that in Ohio and Illinois and Wisconsin." How'd that work out for the Democrats?

Sanders supporters are already jumping into House primary races in unprecedented numbers.

### How can workers make gains?

Regardless of their position on the tax bill the rulers try to hide how workers can win wage raises. They don't come from the rulers' tax policies.

What workers earn depends on our capacity to organize together to *fight* what the bosses do to us, to use union power and advance independent working-class political action. Union leaders have pressed in the opposite direction for decades, saying that workers' livelihoods depend on collaborating with the bosses and the Democratic Party. This has made our unions shrink.

For workers, any expansion in hiring would be welcome, after years of declining living standards and a broadening social crisis. It would improve workers' confidence, creating better conditions to defend our interests in struggle against the bosses.

## LETTERS

### Likes 'Militant' audio version

Just wanted to write in with deep appreciation for the efforts to provide audio recordings of each *Militant* article! I frequently have very long drives to work and being able to listen to the articles in my car has been an excellent experience and a good way to stay caught up on the *Militant*.

I also wanted to offer the suggestion to include on the website a link to another audio recording that is a continuous reading of all the articles. Then you could click once and listen to the whole paper without having to link up to each article separately.

Also I'm wondering if things have progressed towards people being able to sign up for a subscription and pay online? [*We're working on it, stay tuned* — Editor.]

Since my trip to Cuba as part of the Che brigade where I met SWP members, I've been working hard to encourage many of my friends to get

subscriptions to the *Militant*. But it would go a long way if I could get them to sign up on the spot by paying online.

Samir Rohlin Hazboun  
by email

### Jeff Ford's confidence in the SWP never wavered

Jeff Ford, a supporter of the Socialist Workers Party in Seattle, died Oct. 11 after a long battle with cancer. He met the party in 1968 and was a member in Seattle and San Francisco in the 1970s and again in the 1990s.

He worked as a union engi-

neer on the railroad out of Seattle for several years. Before his death he told me that his confidence in the party had never wavered since the Prague Spring in 1968 when he first learned of the SWP and its support for the workers uprising there. He said the SWP was alone in correctly explaining the class forces behind developments in Czechoslovakia and the role of the Stalinist rulers in Moscow in the invasion.

His companion Patti and son Taylor hosted a family gathering with friends and party members to celebrate his life Oct. 21.

Mary Martin  
Seattle, Washington

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The letters column is an open for all viewpoints of interest to working people. Where necessary your letter will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.